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CIA Chief Apologizes After Senate Rebuke

Lawmakers Chide Helms
For Injecting Self
Into Controversy Over
Committee Action

(Washington Bureau of The Sun)
Washington, July 28—The Central Intelligence Agency director was rebuked today for injecting himself into the Senate controversy over committee surveillance of his agency.

Richard M. Helms, the new CIA chief, quickly acknowledged he had made a mistake and relayed word to the Senate he was sorry.

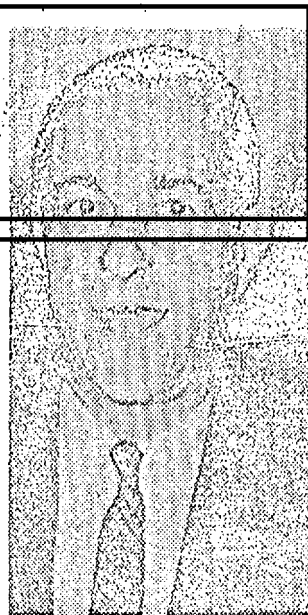
But before his apology was registered, lawmakers who took opposing sides in the Senate battle expressed "shock" that Helms should have indorsed a newspaper editorial lambasting Senator Fulbright (D., Ark.).

Tomorrow, Helms will get an opportunity to make his apologies in person. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, of which Fulbright is chairman, called him to appear at a closed session. Fulbright telephoned Helms to arrange the appearance.

CPYRGHT Fulbright Bid Fails

What got Helms into trouble was the celebrated but unsuccessful attempt by Fulbright's Foreign Relations Committee to obtain a role in overseeing the CIA—long the preserve of the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees.

At a secret session on July 14—a portion of which was published in the Congressional Record today—the Senate voted 61 to 28 to



UPI Telephoto
RICHARD HELMS

sidetrack a Fulbright-backed resolution to set up a special panel on the CIA in which the Foreign Relations Committee would be represented.

Four days later the St. Louis Globe Democrat, which has frequently criticized Fulbright's opposition to Vietnam war policies, published an editorial exulting in the "come-uppance" given the "crafty Arkansan."

"It could mean the end of the CIA, if the agency were subjected to claws of the militant doves on Fulbright's committee."

On Wednesday of this week, the Globe-Democrat published a Letter to the Editor from Helms in

which the CIA director declared:

"I want you to know of my pleasure in reading the editorial 'Brickbats for Fulbright' in the Globe-Democrat of July 18.

"It reflects so well your paper's policy of 'printing the news impartially, supporting what it believes to be right and opposing what it believes to be wrong without regard to party politics.'"

Printed with the letter was a cartoon purporting to show Helms gleefully reading the anti-Fulbright editorial.

"Very Surprised"

When the committee chairman learned of the letter yesterday he told the rival St. Louis Post Dispatch he was "very surprised" that a professional employee of the CIA would inject himself into a political controversy.

Copies of both the letter and the editorial were circulated among senators and at mid-afternoon today the storm broke.

Senator McCarthy (D., Minn.), the prime-mover behind the CIA resolution, took the floor to read both documents in full and begin the chastisement of Helms.

"It was entirely out of place for him to have done this," McCarthy declared.

Asserting Helms's action was a "new departure" involving the CIA in domestic politics, McCarthy said the director "owes an apology not only to Senator Fulbright, but to every senator who supported his resolution and, indeed, to every member of the Senate."

Senator Mansfield (D., Mont.), the majority leader, got to his feet to express surprise that the chief of "the silent service" should have written to a newspaper implying open criticism of a senator.

"A Most Serious Matter"

This should be brought to Helms's attention so it does not become a habit with him, Mansfield snapped, adding it was "a most serious matter."

Senators Young (R., N.D.) and

Saltonstall (R., Mass.), who opposed Fulbright and McCarthy on the CIA issue, joined in the round

robin, saying they were dismayed by the Helms letter.

"Very, very questionable, said Saltonstall, who later telephoned Helms and relayed his apology to the Senate.

"Disappointed and shocked," Young added.

Fulbright, who lounged in his seat listening to the outburst of Senate umbrage, finally took the floor to say the Globe-Democrat blast at him was not "unique" but Helms's letter to the editor certainly was.

"Needs Severe Talking To"

"He needs some very severe talking to by the only committee having jurisdiction over him," the Foreign Relations chairman said to Saltonstall, ranking GOP member of the Armed Services and Operations committees.

It would be interesting, Fulbright added, to know if Helms wrote other letters (the CIA director later assured Saltonstall he had not) and if the intelligence agency got involved in domestic matters such as labor union elections.

Fulbright said he was surprised that a career man like Helms would have "so little discretion" as to write the letter to the Globe-Democrat.

But McCarthy took a more sardonic view, holding that there may be problems when career men get promoted to the top and have to become adjusted to a new life.